

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts**

**September 8, 2015**

**9:30 AM**

### **Two Hundred and Ninety-Fifth Meeting**

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In Attendance: Mr. David Rowlett, President; Mr. Shane Wells, Vice-President; Mr. Allan Bryant, Secretary-Treasurer; Mr. Kevin Jeffries; Mr. Orville Bennett; Mr. Bobbie Wilson; Mr. Ted Jessup; Mr. Randy McCallon; Mr. Rodney Dick; Mr. Jeff Rice; Deputy Commissioner Sandy Gruzesky, DNR; State Conservationist Karen Woodrich, NRCS; and Mr. Jody Thompson, Ecotech.

Also in Attendance were the following KY DOC employees: Director Kim Richardson and Assistant Director Johnna McHugh.

Quorum was met.

**Meeting Called to Order** - at 9:30 am by KACD President David Rowlett.

**Discussion of Kentucky 31 Fescue** – Mr. Allan Bryant introduced the discussion, which was prompted by a resolution approved at the KACD convention in July. According to the resolution, KACD should “make every effort possible to remove Kentucky fescue 31 from any invasive species list and take extreme measures to ensure that it is never listed as a noxious invasive species, limiting the availability of Kentucky fescue 31 seed.” Mr. Jody Thompson, President of Kentucky’s Exotic Pest Plant Council (EPPC), was invited to speak with KACD about the reasons that Kentucky 31 is listed as a severe threat. Mr. Thompson stated that the EPPC’s purpose is to help Kentucky’s natural areas, and Kentucky 31 is an invasive species that causes problems in those natural areas. He states that Kentucky 31 outcompetes other plants in grassland habitats and that it is not good forage for small mammals. Mr. Bryant argued that Kentucky 31 is great for hillsides and waterways, and Mr. Rodney Dick stated that nothing else available is comparable to Kentucky 31. Ms. Karen Woodrich suggested bridging the gap between technical and natural professionals and invited EPPC to the state technical committee meetings. Mr. Thompson stated that EPPC was not advocating taking Kentucky 31 out of agricultural areas but instead providing options to people. Mr. Bryant stated that his goal was to get more information onto the EPPC website explaining the uses for Kentucky 31. Mr. Thompson stated that the EPPC has a meeting scheduled soon and that he will make sure that Kentucky 31 and KACD’s concerns are on the agenda.

**KACD Minutes of the Last Meeting – May 12, 2015** – Mr. Jeff Rice made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Kevin Jeffries seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

**Treasurer's Report** - Treasurer Allan Bryant presented the KACD Treasurer's Report with copies given. Mr. Bryant made the motion to approve the report as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Ted Jessup. **Motion carried.** Concerns were raised about the current status of the Envirothon account. This discussion will be revisited at the November meeting after the Envirothon Committee Meeting in October.

**KACD Budget** – Treasurer Allan Bryant presented a draft budget with copies given. Mr. Bryant made the motion to approve as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Jeffries. Mr. Shane Wells asked about the budgeted amount for the agriculture legislative reception and the difference in last year's actual amounts. Mr. Bryant reported that the budgeted income was a goal. Mr. Wells would like to see a larger amount budgeted for out of state travel. This discussion will be revisited at the November meeting. **Motion carried.**

**Expenses** – Treasurer Allan Bryant presented a list of expenses to be approved.

1. Reimbursing Jeff Rice's NACD expenses – Mr. Bryant moved, Mr. Orville Bennett seconded. **Motion carried.**
2. Reimbursing Kevin Jeffries' NACD expenses – Mr. Bryant moved, Mr. Bennett seconded. **Motion carried.**
3. Paying NACD dues of \$775 – Mr. Bryant moved, Mr. Rice seconded. Kevin Jeffries made the motion to amend the motion to pay \$1,000 instead. Mr. Rice seconded. **Amendment carried. Motion carried.**

**KACD Correspondence** - President David Rowlett presented the report and began by stating that two (2) letters had been received. The first was from Ag Environment in the Classroom requesting support for a third mobile science lab. The \$5,000 requested would be used for soil tables and grant matching. Mr. Randy McCallon moved, Mr. Rodney Dick seconded. **Motion carried.** The second letter was from the McCracken County Conservation District requesting that KACD hold their conference calls earlier in the year and let call participation be a qualifying event for incentive per diem. KACD moved at an earlier meeting to hold the conference calls earlier in the year. Mr. Jeffries moved to recommend that the Soil and Water Conservation Commission make KACD committee conference calls a qualifying event for incentive per diem. Mr. Bryant seconded. **Motion carried.**

**NACD Director's Report** - Mr. Kevin Jeffries presented the report. He presented a review of the Southeast NACD conference in Tupelo, MS. During that event, a new MOU with signed by NRCS, NACD, and NACDE. Dan Ellison and Jerry Peery were inducted into the NACD Hall of Fame. Cindy Dunn of Caldwell County talked about soil health during Kentucky's district showcase. NACD is having a cash flow problem, so all districts are encouraged to get their dues submitted as quickly as possible. Mr. Jeffries will forward a list of the districts that haven't paid their dues to DOC Director Kim Richardson so that she can forward the list to the KACD board. Personal calls to these districts will be made. The NACD annual convention will be held in Reno,

NV Jan. 31-Feb. 3. The Southeast Regional NACD meeting will be held next year in Cherokee, NC July 31-Aug. 2.

**KACD Auxiliary Report** - Ms. Betty Barrick was not present, so Ms. Richardson presented the report. All districts are encouraged to promote the scholarship contest, particularly to nontraditional students. Ms. Richardson did not have the numbers regarding the amount of money raised for the scholarship fund.

Ms. Terri Shaw will begin keeping the Auxiliary's books in addition to KACD's.

The NACD poster contest is titled "Local Heroes: Your Hardworking Pollinators." Entries should be sent to the Barren County Conservation District office instead of to the Division of Conservation this year.

**KACD Convention wrap-up** – The group reviewed a letter received by President David Rowlett from Mr. Rodney Bruce with his concerns about the convention. There were some complaints about there not being enough notice that the convention would end with the luncheon on Tuesday. There were also complaints about the awards ceremony being too long. The group discussed which awards could be moved to the Monday night awards presentation. The awards presentations will be discussed at greater length when setting the agenda for next year's convention.

**Aldo Leopold Award** – The group discussed whether to continue to host the award ceremony. It was noted that KACD will not be expected to donate \$1,000 this year. Mr. Jeffries moved to continue to host the award ceremony for another year. Mr. Bryant seconded. Motion carried.

**Legislative Reception** – Plans for the legislative reception were discussed. President Rowlett would like to have a "Champion" for each legislator to be assigned to get information and invitations to that legislator. Possible dates were discussed. Mr. Jeffries moved to try to have the reception on January 11 or January 14. Mr. Bryant seconded. **Motion carried.** Ms. Richardson will send a list of who has been asked to sponsor previously so the group can consider additional sponsors.

**NACD National Convention** – The convention will be held in Reno, NV Jan. 31 – Feb. 3, 2016. The room rates and airfare are reasonable. People are encouraged to go to see what other states are doing and how NACD is helping them. Mr. Rice and Mr. Rowlett both said they would try to attend.

**NACD Fly-In** – The NACD leadership may not coordinate a fly-in this year. There has been discussion on a national level of moving that event to summer. KACD will still plan to visit Washington, D.C. in late March. NRCS will work on materials again, but KACD needs to decide on an overriding message to give the legislators. The group discussed making the trip one night longer to accommodate travel times. KACD will look into their budget to see if they can afford to take at least one person from each congressional district.

**Division of Conservation Report** - Director Kim Richardson, DOC, presented the report.

**Building move** – Ms. Richardson informed the board about plans to consolidate the entire Energy and Environment Cabinet into one building in Frankfort. This new building, which will be located on Sower Boulevard in Frankfort, will house all of this cabinet, as well as the Department of Education and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. The new building will be ready for move-in next summer, close to the time of KACD convention. There are several small meeting rooms and three large meeting rooms in the new building. No one is sure yet how hard it will be to reserve rooms for KACD meetings. To prepare for moving, DOC employees will be scanning documents, as there will be no file space available in the new building. Ms. Richardson will keep KACD informed about the progress of the building.

**Jim Claypool Art and Conservation Writing Contest** – Ms. Richardson told the board that the art and writing contests started the week before, on September 1. The topic this year is wildlife, with the title of the tabloid being “The Wild Side of Kentucky.” Districts have access to digital copies of the tabloid online, and paper copies will be distributed at the KACDE meeting in Jabez. Ms. Richardson noted that wildlife is usually the most popular topic, so the number of entries should be increasing this year.

**Envirothon** – Next year’s current issue topic is “Invasive Species: A Challenge To The Environment, Economy And Society.” This ties into KACD’s earlier discussion about Kentucky 31 fescue, and Mr. Thompson might be a good resource for the contest this year. The Envirothon committee will be meeting in October to plan next year’s contest, and a discussion of entry fees will happen at that time. Ms. Richardson will update the board at the November KACD meeting about the contest.

### **Agency Comment**

**Natural Resources Conservation Service** –State Conservationist Karen Woodrich, NRCS, presented the report.

Ms. Woodrich informed the board that NRCS State Office is moving to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of their current building. For right now some employees are displaced and maybe working in alternate locations. This comes at the end of the federal fiscal year, September 30<sup>th</sup>.

With the 2014 Farm Bill, there was supposed to be “no year money.” OMB will sweep all funds at the end of the fiscal year and reallocate, much like it was in the past. NRCS has obligated \$12 million in EQIP funds. CSP has not been completed due to the fact that Kentucky just received 7,000 additional acres that must be obligated by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Waivers are being sought for these landowners so that they are not in violation of their contract.

From a technical side, NRCS has entered into 15 agreements with conservation districts to provide technical staff. NRCS will provide \$19,000 to multiple counties, and the group of counties will contribute \$16,000 for 1 year with a 10% administrative fee.

NRCS has not heard much from Washington DC concerning the budget other than no furniture or trucks can be bought in the new fiscal year. Kentucky has purchased 30 new vehicles this year so their fleet should be in good shape. A continuing resolution will probably be the solution.

Kentucky Department for Natural Resources – Deputy Commissioner Sandy Gruzesky reported about SB 86 on Oil and Gas Modernization. The primary discussion with the Oil and Gas Workgroup has been about water withdrawal issues. There is no restriction on the water withdrawal for oil and gas extraction. This could be a potential conflict between agriculture, and oil and gas industry. Farm Bureau as well as the Environmental Quality Commission will be discussing this. It was suggested that this be a topic at the Farm Bureau Water Management Group.

Farm Service Agency – No report was presented.

University of Kentucky – No report was presented.

Kentucky Department of Agriculture – No report was presented.

Division of Forestry – No report was presented.

KACDE – No report was presented.

**Adjournment** - A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Shane Wells. Motion seconded by Mr. Randy McCallon. **Motion carried**, meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

**Next Board Meeting** -

The remainder of the 2015 Meeting Schedule is as follows:

November 10<sup>th</sup>

*Unless otherwise indicated all meetings will be held at 2 Hudson Hollow Road (DNR Building) in Frankfort beginning at 9:30 a.m.*